



Town of Simsbury


933 HOPMEADOW STREET

P.O. BOX 495

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Brandon L. Robertson, Director of Administrative Services

March 26, 2007

MEMO TO: BOARD OF SELECTMEN
ATTN: THOMAS E. VINCENT, FIRST SELECTMAN
FROM:  BRANDON ROBERTSON
RE: MANAGEMENT UPDATES AND REPORTS

Below is an update on various activities that may be of interest to the Board of Selectmen.

Metro Hartford Alliance Seminar

A seminar entitled "Economic Development for Public Officials" will be conducted by the Metro Hartford Alliance on March 29th at the Simsbury High School Auditorium beginning at 6:30 p.m. The seminar is sponsored by the Simsbury Economic Development Commission. The seminar is anticipated to be up to 2 ½ hours in duration and will cover the following broad topical areas: The Changing World of Economic Development, Regional Cooperation-Strategies and Incentives for Global Competitiveness and How does your Town fit into the Regional Perspective-Economic & Community Development.

Invitations for this seminar have been sent to the Town's various boards and commissions. In addition, notices have been posted on the bulletin board, the Town's web site and a notice has been included in the news briefs section of the Courant. We have asked board and commission members to provide an RSVP by the 19th so we can get a sense of attendance. However, no RSVP is required and anyone, including the public, can attend.

We have also received notice Simsbury will be hosting a Community Forum on April 5th as sponsored by the Citizen's Network of the Capital Region and the Metro Hartford Alliance. According to the communication we received "The Citizen's Network of the Capital Region is pleased to help promote the regional collaboration project with the Capital Region Partnership. Come out to one of our six regional town meetings and hear why people, prosperity and place matter so much to the Metro Hartford Region. The forum will be held at Eno Memorial Hall on April 5th at 700 p.m. and will be moderated by Arthur House, Senior Vice President, Public Affairs of Webster Bank. Other speakers will include: Colleen Palmer, Deputy Executive Direction, Capitol Region Education Council, Timothy Abbott, Director, The Litchfield Hills Greenprint Project/Trust for Public Land, Fred Carstensen, Director, Connecticut Center of Economic Analysis.

Telephone (860) 658-3230
Facsimile (860) 658-9467

Twincen@simsbury-ct.gov
www.simsbury-ct.gov

An Equal Opportunity Employer
8:30 - 7:00 Monday
8:30 - 4:30 Tuesday through Friday

Additional Educational Sessions

On April 10th, the Town will host Thomas Hennick, the Public Education Officer of the Freedom of Information Commission at the Simsbury High School Amphitheater. Mr. Hennick will be on hand to present the requirements of the FOIA and answer questions. Notice of this session has been sent to the chairs of the Town's boards and commissions. Elected and appointed officials, staff and the public are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting.

As you may know, there has been some concerns raised recently regarding records retention requirements for elected and appointed officials. While we have not yet received confirmation, Ms. Eunice G. DiBella, the State of Connecticut Public Records Administrator, has been invited the session as well to present the State's records retention requirements and answer questions. If Ms. DiBella cannot attend the meeting on the 10th, we will try to schedule her to come out another night.

I have attached a document from the Connecticut State Library entitled "Electronic and Voice Mail-A Management and Retention Guide for State and Municipal Agencies" for your review. This document will also be posted on the Town's web site and will be made available to the Town's elected and appointed officials. It is important to note that records retention requirements do require that elected and appointed officials, by law, retain substantive documents they transmit and receive in the discharge of their public duties. Even though these communications may be sent or received from a home computer, it is important to remember that they are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Please review the attached document, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me and I will be happy to put you in touch with the resources necessary to answer your questions.

Connecticut Town and City Manager's Association Annual Meeting

I wanted to inform the Board that the Connecticut Town and City Manager's Association will hold its annual meeting at the Simsbury Inn on June 8th. This event consists of a seminar presented by the International County/City Manager's Association and a social component. I invite any interested member of the Board to stop by the event.

Program Developed with University of Connecticut-Center of Continuing Studies

I am pleased to inform the Board that Simsbury will host a program sponsored by the University of Connecticut-Center for Continuing Studies entitled Foundations of Supervision in the Public Sector. The curriculum for this program was developed by the Town Managers of Granby, Farmington, Avon and me. Each of the Town's listed will sponsor approximately five individuals to attend this training which will culminate in a certificate. The Town's will share the cost based on the number of participants each community enrolls in the program. The program will cover skills including: Communication Skills, Presentation Skills, Working Within a Unionized Environment, Managing Others, Dispute Resolution and Preparing For and Handling Evaluations.

Receipt of Medicare Part D Reimbursement

The Town offers qualified retirees the option of enrolling in a Medicare Supplement program once they reach the age of 65. This Medicare supplement program consists of a prescription and a medical component. The program is designed to supplement the Medicare program which provides primary coverage. As you may know, the law governing Medicare recently changed to include Part D, prescription coverage. Because the Town provides prescription coverage that would otherwise be provided through the Medicare plan, we are entitled to a reimbursement for a portion of those expenses. For the plan year July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006, I am pleased to inform the Board that we have received \$37,000 from the Center for Medicare Services. The law became effective January 1, therefore, this amount is only ½ of the rebate that we can expect in future years.

Town of Simsbury Voter Canvass Program

The Town of Simsbury Voter Canvass Program as conducted by the Town's Registrars of Voters is currently underway. The Registrar's of Voters were recently made aware of an error in some of the canvas cards that were sent. On some of the cards, the mailing address and the name inside of the card did not match. This was caused by an error in the software of the Company that Adkins, the printer, uses to mail the canvas cards.

We have met with a representative of Adkins' Printing Company to discuss the situation. It was agreed that follow up forms will be sent to all voters in Town who did not return their cards. There will be no additional cost to the Town of Simsbury for this process. In addition, the Registrars of Voters, Town Clerk and Secretary of State's Office are all satisfied with the resolution of this issue.

Donation by Aquarion Water Company of Property Located at 6 Station Street

The Aquarion Water Company has expressed interest in donating the property located at 6 Station Street to the Town of Simsbury. This building is a two story office building, containing approximately .07 acres. The property is the former utility operations and customer service center for the Simsbury water supply system. The property appears to have a value of approximately \$350,000 and Aquarion paid approximately \$7,000 in property tax for the building on the 05 Grand List. Aquarion ceased operation from the Station Street Office facility on November 30, 2005 and the customer service function was transferred to the Company's call center in Monroe. Also, as you may know, the Building functioned as the Town's Police Department from 1961-1984.

There are a number of conditions that must be met prior to the transfer. The Town Attorney is drafting a purchase and sale agreement. The transaction will be contingent on a title search, environmental assessment and approval by the DPUC. Also, the Board of Selectmen will have to approve the acquisition, subject to an 8-24 referral to the Planning Commission. At this time, I do not have a firm time line in place for the acquisition of this property. It appears that the intent of Aquarion is to donate the building to the Town.

Department Updates

Library

The Library closed its doors on Monday, March 12th and the move to the temporary quarters was underway. Amodio Movers were chosen for the moving and storage operations. This was a three-way move to temporary quarters at 540 Hopmeadow in Simsmore Square, to accessible storage by the Bank of America on Hopmeadow Street and to the mover's warehouse. Also, microfilm was delivered to the Geneological Library on Hopmeadow. Volunteers worked with staff and the movers to pack and unpack the collections. The telephone and data lines all had to be moved as well.

This has been a very complex process to date. Sue Bullock and her staff have done an excellent job in coordinating and executing this move.

Culture, Parks and Recreation

Director of Culture, Parks and Recreation, Gerry Toner, asked me to mention that the Pro Shop at the Simsbury Farms Golf Course is now open and season passes are available. The Pro shop is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Also, summer program registration is currently under way. To register for programs or access program information, please go to the Culture, parks and Recreation Department's web site at www.simsburyrec.com.

Planning and Land Use Department

The Planning Department continues to process applications for items both large and small. Recent activities have included the processing and approval of the Riverview Banquet Facility. This application went through several meetings with the Design Review Board, the Conservation Commission-Inland Wetlands Agency the Planning and the Zoning Commission. All approvals are now in place and we are awaiting the submission of final plans as the Building Permit will be the next approval to be sought.

Other activities are underway in the Department.